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# Value of Statewide Tests for Students Questioned

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What are the benefits of testing 110,000 students in Hawaii public schools each year?

That's what two state representatives want to know.

House Education Chairman Arnold Morgado questioned overlap among the numerous kinds of tests, the speed with which results are returned to the schools, and whether teachers are adjusting lessons to fit student needs as shown by the examinations.

Rep. Fred Hemmings said he couldn't believe classroom teachers were incapable of giving tests and interpreting the results "without a huge bureaucracy" to analyze the scores.

The House Education Committee approved a resolution requesting a study of the testing program.

Stafford Nagatani, director of the Department of Education's planning and evaluation services branch, said the statewide tests given to 110,000 students each year "are of value to the teachers in assessing the performance of the students" and provide a comparison of the Hawaii system with Mainland school systems.

HE SAID the following tests are given statewide:

- ✓ The Stanford Achievement Test (SAT) to students in grades 2, 3, 6, 8 and 10.

- ✓ The Differential Aptitude Test to students in grade 9.

- ✓ The Hawaii State Test of Essential Competencies at grades 9-12.

- ✓ The Competency Based Measure (CBM) at grade 3, and proposed for grades 6, 8, and 10.

- ✓ Tests in 10 subjects for students wanting credit by examination.

Nagatani said the test program "was never funded adequately" to get results back to the schools quickly.

Educational specialist Mildred Higashi said teachers of seventh-grade students use the results of the Stanford test given to those youngsters as sixth-graders.

Morgado asked if a seventh-grade social studies teacher could adjust lessons to fit the needs of students who score low in reading on the sixth-grade test.

"We're hoping that is being done," Higashi answered.

She said state program specialists in mathematics and language arts develop models based on the test results. During in-service training, the teachers are taught how to use those models in their classrooms, Higashi said.

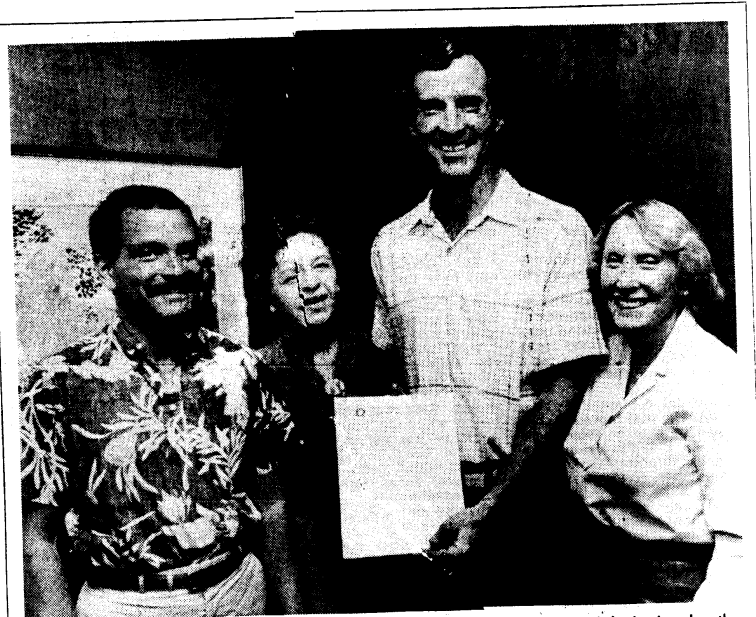
HIGASHI ALSO said the Stanford test covers only math and language arts and that the CBM test is needed to cover other areas.

The CBM, used only in Hawaii, measures self-esteem, attitudes, decision-making skills, academic skills and performance in the fine arts and physical education.

Education Superintendent Francis Hatanaka last week announced the cancellation of the sixth-grade CBM scheduled to begin this spring.

Hatanaka said some "bugs" would have to be worked out of the sixth-grade CBM. He said schools that had started giving the test could continue, but others should not start administering the test.

Morgado yesterday calculated the entire test program could be costing "over a million dollars." He said, "I don't see what you're doing with the test results."



**HONORED**—Star-Bulletin reporter John Christensen is presented a special citation by the Federation of Women's Clubs for his series of articles on the hazards of pesticides. From left are: Star-Bulletin managing editor William Cox; Elaine Short, the club's conservation chairman; Christensen; and Dorothy Frederick, the group's state president. —Star-Bulletin Photo by Craig T. Kojima.